

REINCARNATION

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HOW SHALL THE ALLIES MAKE PEACE?

A knowledge of the laws of karma and of dharma would help those now charged with fixing the terms of peace between the powers recently at war with one another.

We hold it true that hatred ceases not by hatred but by love; that vengeance belongs to The Lords of Karma, not to man; that the Teutonic nations will yet play a part in the drama of human life even though it be a rôle less glorious than that they threw away in the pursuit of gain by the sword.

We conceive that Germany should be made to pay for the damage she has done so far as human labor can pay for war-ravaging. But she should be allowed to exist during the process. She should not be allowed to shoulder nations like Belgium

and France out of commercial advantage; but she should be allowed to obtain raw materials in reasonable quantities and be given a fair opportunity to sell her goods abroad. If this is not done she can never repay her debt.

Germans will act in good taste during the next generation if they play their pipes softly; the world will not for many years feel the fullest satisfaction in the thought of Germany and Germans. But it is not necessary or wise to pervert the truth about the service Germany has rendered Science and the Art of Music in the past. It is a fact that Germany—and Austria to a lesser degree—were on an organized basis for the production of collective, massive scientific facts, data and principles for decades before other nations thought of such a thing. Indeed no nation has ever done what Germany did in this matter of systematically developing Science for the welfare of man. Germany opened her university-doors wide to foreigners. Thousands of travellers from other lands visited, not a few, but many German institutions and found privileges almost more generous than did Germany's sons themselves. The teaching was scholarly, brilliant and abundant beyond dreams. It is simply untrue that the Germans were dull routinists, grubbers, hacks and cataloguers. They were tireless workers and modest gleaners of truth in all fields and fearless students of principles.

A contemporary work on Carbon may be dull and tiresome if you are not especially interested in Carbon. Suppose you want to know about the gas-absorbing power of carbon in order to make gas-masks for your soldier-boys, would you wish

any sentences on Carbon omitted from your encyclopædia of chemistry? If you were not especially concerned with the subject of eye-diseases you would think a series of huge volumes on the eye a clumsy and prosy work of stupid drudges. But if your son happened to have a cancer develop in the interior of the eye-ball would you not ask God's blessing on the Germans who had labored for years to bring together all the knowledge of ophthalmology they could find for you to read?

Is it worth while or wise to lie about the Germans or to maltreat them because we have defeated them? Aren't we strong enough to administer that phase of justice to them which the law of our dharma imposes upon us without falling into such sickly sentimentality as would blind us to the duty of asking for the incarceration of murderers, the repatriation of deported French and Belgian women and children and the replacement of machinery in the factories that the German hordes have rifled?

Let the representatives of the allies sit calmly before the vast scale-pans that hang from the balances of Justice; let them add masses and masses to equal justice; let them use finest pincers to pick off grains of dust in excess of what the truth of Justice demands.

These are times in which we can grow cruel or, on the other hand, fail to give France and Belgium their due. Let us be wise and, studying the balance, act so that the nations will not become deeply involved in further karma to plunge them into reverberating suffering in the recurring ages.

W. V-H.

FUTURE LIFE

Among the books written in recent times on beliefs regarding conditions after death perhaps the most valuable is the large work by William R. Alger, entitled *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*. The fourteenth edition of 832 large pages, was published by Roberts Brothers, Boston, in 1889. It represents almost a life-time of research on the

“One question, more than others all,
From thoughtful minds implores reply;
It is, as breathed from stars and pall,
What fate awaits us when we die?”

The work is truly, as Mr. Alger says, in a sense an epitome of the thought of mankind on the destiny of man. The author is refreshingly sincere and outspoken. In his preface to the tenth edition in 1878 he writes:

The present work is not only historic but it is also polemic; polemic, however, not in the spirit or interest of any party or conventicle, but in the spirit and interest of science and humanity. Orthodoxy insists on doctrines whose irrationality in their current forms is such that they can never be a basis for the union of all men. Therefore, to discredit these, in preparation for more reasonable and auspicious views, is a service to the whole human race. . the author . . still believes, as he did in his earlier time, that there is much of error and superstition, bigotry and cruelty, to be purged out of the prevailing theological creed and sentiment of Christendom. . . The doctrine of a future life has been made so frightful by the preponderance in it of elements of material torture and sectarian narrowness, that a natural revulsion of generous sentiment joins with the impulse of materialistic science to produce a growing disbelief in any life at all beyond the grave. Nothing else will do so much to renew and extend faith in God and immortality as a

noble and beautiful doctrine of God and immortality, freed from disfiguring terror, selfishness and favoritism.

. . . For there is a providential plan of God, not injected by arbitrary miracle, but inhering in the order of the world, centered in the propulsive heart of humanity, which beats throb by throb along the web of events, removing obstacles and clearing the way for the revelation of the completed pattern. When it is done no trumpets may be blown, no rocks rent, no graves opened. But all immortal spirits will be at their goals, and the universe will be full of music.

In the general preface we find the following:

Ideas, like coins, bear the stamp of the age and brain they were struck in. Many a phantom which ought to have vanished at the first cock-crowing of reason still holds its seat on the oppressed heart of faith before the terror-stricken eyes of the multitude. Every thoughtful scholar who loves his fellow-men must feel it an obligation to do what he can to remove painful superstitions, and to spread the peace of a cheerful faith and the wholesome light of truth. The *theories* in theological systems being but philosophy, why should they not be freely subjected to philosophical criticism?

Alger's work is a veritable gold mine of information useful for students of life. Future life is treated from almost every conceivable point of view, and an enormous number of quotations and references to authorities are given. From time to time some of these may appear in this magazine, especially those which deal with reincarnation, transmigration and metempsychosis.

Very interesting and instructive is the history of the author's own belief as to reincarnation and the changes in that belief which he made during the later part of his researches. While he was at first somewhat indifferent to and perhaps ignorant of, the true worth of the principle of reincarnation, in the later editions of his work he

speaks quite favorably of the teachings, so much so that he feels it necessary to apologise for his enthusiasm for the doctrine. In the earlier editions there is a chapter of thirteen pages on "Metempsychosis; or, Transmigration of Souls," from which the following excerpts are taken:

No other doctrine has exerted so extensive, controlling and permanent an influence upon mankind as that of the metempsychosis,—the notion that when the soul leaves the body it is born anew in another body, its rank, character, circumstances and experience in each successive existence depending on its qualities, deeds and attainments in its preceding lives. Such a theory, well matured, bore unresisted sway through the great Eastern world, long before Moses slept in his little ark of bulrushes on the shore of the Egyptian river; Alexander the Great gazed with amazement on the self-immolation by fire to which it inspired the Gymnosophists; Cæsar found its tenets propagated among the Gauls beyond the Rubicon; and at this hour it reigns despotic, as the learned and travelled Professor of Sanscrit at Oxford tells us, "without any sign of decrepitude or decay, over the Burman, Chinese, Tartar, Tibetan and Indian nations, including at least six hundred and fifty millions of mankind." There is abundant evidence to prove that this scheme of thought prevailed at a very early period among the Egyptians, all classes and sects of the Hindus, the Persian disciples of the Magi, and the Druids, and, in a later age, among the Greeks and Romans as represented by Musæus, Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Macrobius, Ovid, and many others. It was generally adopted by the Jews from the time of the Babylonian captivity. Traces of it have been discovered among the ancient Scythians, the African tribes, some of the Pacific Islanders, and various aboriginal nations both of North and South America. . . .

Upon the whole, the metempsychosis may be understood, as to its inmost meaning and its final issue, to be either a Development, a Revolution, or a Retribution,—a Divine system of development eternally leading creatures in a graduated ascension from the base towards the apex of

the creation,—a perpetual cycle in the order of nature fixedly recurring by the necessities of a physical fate unalterable, unavoidable, eternal,—a scheme of punishment and reward exactly fitted to the exigencies of every case, presided over by a moral Nemesis, and issuing at last in the emancipation of every purified soul into infinite bliss, when, by the upward gravitation of spirit, they shall all have been strained through the successively finer-growing filters of the worlds, from the coarse-grained foundation of matter to the lower shore of the Divine essence.

The author gives some considerations “in seeking to account for the extent and the tenacious grasp of this antique and stupendous belief”: Belief in a separate existence of soul as apart from body; strange resemblances and sympathies between men and animals; myths may have come to be believed as facts; certain psychological experiences of apparently remembering facts from an unknown past:

“Full oft my feelings make me start,
Like foot-prints on some desert shore,
As if the chambers of my heart
Had heard their shadowy step before.”

fifthly, the theory of the transmigration of souls is marvellously adapted to explain the seeming chaos of moral inequality, injustice and manifold evil presented in the world of human life. No other conceivable view so admirably accounts for the heterogeneousness of our present existence, refutes the charge of a groundless favoritism urged against Providence, and completely justifies the ways of God to man. The loss of remembrance between the states is no valid objection to the theory; because such a loss is the necessary condition of a fresh and fair probation. . . Once admit the theory to be true, and all difficulties in regard to moral justice vanish. If a man be born blind, deaf, a cripple, a slave, an idiot, it is because in a previous life he abused his privileges and heaped on his soul a load of guilt which he is now ex-

piating. If a sudden calamity overwhelm a good man with unmerited ruin and anguish, it is the penalty of some crime committed in a state of responsible being beyond the confines of his present memory. Does a surprising piece of good fortune accrue to any one,—splendid riches, a commanding position, a peerless friendship? It is the reward of virtuous deeds done in an earlier life. Every flower blighted or diseased,—every shrub gnarled, awry, and blasted,—every brute ugly and maimed,—every man deformed, wretched, or despised,—is reaping in these hard conditions of being, as contrasted with the fate of the favored and perfect specimens of the kind, the fruit of sin in a foregone existence. . .

Finally, this doctrine, having been suggested by the various foregoing considerations, . . . was adopted by the principal philosophers and priesthoods of antiquity, and taught to the common people with authority. . .

This, then, is what we must say of the ancient and widely-spread doctrine of transmigration. As a suggestion or theory naturally arising from empirical observation and confirmed by a variety of phenomena, it is plausible, attractive, and, in some stages of knowledge, not only easy to be believed, but hard to be resisted. As an ethical scheme clearing up on principles of poetic justice the most perplexed and awful problems in the world, it throws streams of light through the abysses of evil, gives dramatic solution to many a puzzle, and, abstractly considered, charms the understanding and the conscience. As a philosophical dogma answering to some strange, vague passages in human nature and experience, it echoes with dreamy sweetness through the deep mystic chambers of our being. As the undisputed creed which has inspired and spell-bound hundreds of millions of our race for perhaps over a hundred and fifty generations, it commands deference and deserves study. But, viewing it as a thesis in the light of to-day, challenging intelligent scrutiny and sober belief, we scarcely need to say that, based on shadows and on arbitrary interpretations of superficial appearances, built of reveries and occult experiences, fortified by unreliable inferences, destitute of any substantial evidence, it is unable to face the severity of science.

Then follow various arguments designed to offset the above 'considerations' for the belief:

Mutual correspondences between men and animals are explained by the fact that they are—all living beings are—the products of the same God and the same nature, and built up according to one plan. . . The sense of pre-existence—the confused idea that these occurrences have thus happened to us before—which is so often and strongly felt, is explicable partly by the supposition of some sudden and obscure mixture of associations, some discordant stroke on the keys of recollection, jumbling together echoes of bygone scenes, snatches of unremembered dreams, and other hints and colors in a weird and uncommanded manner. The phenomenon is accounted for still more decisively by Dr. Wigand's theory of the "Duality of the Mind." The mental organs are double,—one on each side of the brain. . .

There is a strange grandeur, an affecting mystery, in the view of the creation from the stand-point of the metempsychosis. It is an awful dream-palace all aswarm with falling and climbing creatures clothed in ever-shifting disguises. The races and changes of being constitute a boundless masquerade of souls, whose bodies are vizards and whose fortunes poetic retribution. The motive furnished by the doctrine to self-denial and toil has a peerless sublimity. . .

The reader will note the sharp contrast of the above views with the following, written fifteen years later, in which the author betrays his own beliefs, which are more than favorable, even though his conception of 'the transmigration' is far from the highly enlightened one held by our own authorities about true reincarnation:

There is a third way, in addition to the ghost-world of the primitive faith of barbarians, and the resurrection climax of the Christian and Parsee and Hebrew and Moslem creeds, in which the imagination of man, moved by his instinct and reason, has concreted the idea of a future life; namely, by the doctrine of transmigration.

A striking feature and no slight recommendation of the foregoing view of the true meaning of the resurrection is that it reconciles these two chief forms of the belief in immortal life. For resurrection and transmigration agree in the central point of a restoration of the disembodied soul to a new bodily existence, only the former represents this as a single collective miracle wrought by an arbitrary stroke of God at the close of the earthly drama, the latter depicts it as constantly taking place in the regular fulfilment of the divine plan in the creation. This difference is certainly, to a scientific and philosophical thinker, who reasons on the data of nature and experience and not on the dicta of theologians, strongly in favor of the Oriental theory. We have no experience whatever of any general resurrection, but all experience is full of the constant appearances of souls in freshly created bodies throughout the scale of sentient being. If our final future life is to be a bodily one there surely is a world of presumptive evidence, therefore, in behalf of transmigration as opposed to resurrection. Besides the various distinctive arguments of its own, every reason for the resurrection holds with at least equal force for transmigration. The argument from analogy is especially strong. It is natural to argue from the universal spectacle of incarnated life that this is the eternal scheme everywhere, the variety of souls finding in the variety of worlds an everlasting series of adventures, in appropriate organisms; there being, as Paul said, one kind of flesh of birds, another kind of flesh of beasts, another of man, another of angels, and so on. Our present lack of recollection of past lives is no disproof of their actuality. Every night we lose all knowledge of the past, but every day we reawaken to a memory of the whole series of days and nights. So in one life we may forget or dream, and in another recover the whole thread of experience from the beginning.

In any event, it must be confessed that of all the thoughtful and refined forms of the belief in a future life none has had so extensive and prolonged a prevalence as this. It has the vote of the majority, having for ages been held by half of the human race with an intensity of conviction almost without a parallel. . It played

an important part in the speculations of the early Fathers of the Christian Church, and has often cropped out in the works of later theologians. Men of the profoundest metaphysical genius, like Scotus Erigena and Leibnitz, have affirmed it, and sought to give it a logical or scientific basis. And even amidst the predominance of skeptical and materialistic influences in Europe and America, at the present time, we constantly meet individuals with independent minds who earnestly believe the alluring dogma. For, to a large and varied class of minds, the doctrine holds a transcendent attraction as well as a manifold plausibility. . .

But the strongest support of the theory of transmigration is the happy moral solution it seems to give to the problem of the dark and distressing inequality and injustice which otherwise appear so predominant in the experience of the world. To the superficial observer of human life the whole scene of struggle, sin and sorrow, nobleness and joy, triumph and defeat, is a tangled maze of inconsistencies, a painful combination of violent discords. But if we believe that every soul, from that of the lowest insect to that of the greatest archangel, forms an affiliated member of the infinite family of God, and is eternal in its conscious essence, perishable only as to its evanescent disguises of unconscious incarnation; that every act of every creature is followed by its legitimate reactions; that these actions and reactions constitute a law of retribution absolutely perfect; that these souls, with all their doings and sufferings are interconnected with one another, and with the whole, all whose relationships co-penetrate and co-operate with mutual influences whose reports are infallible and with lines of sequence that never break,—then the bewildering maze becomes a vindicated plan, the horrible discord a divine harmony. What an explication it gives of those mysteries of evil, pain, sorrow and retribution, which so often wrap the innocent and the wicked in one sad fate, if we but see that no individual stands alone, but trails along with him the unfinished sequels of all ancestral experience, and, furthermore, is so bound up with his simultaneous race that each is responsible for all and all for each, and that no one can be wholly saved or safe until all are

redeemed and perfected! Then every suffering we endure for faults not our own, the consequence of the deeds of others, assumes a holy light and a sublime dignity, associating us with that great sacrament of atoning pain whereof the crucified Christ is not the exclusive instance but the representative head.

The above translation of the ecclesiastical doctrine of the resurrection into a form scientifically credible, and reconciled with the immemorial tenet of transmigration, may seem to some a very fanciful speculation, a mere intellectual toy. Perhaps it is so. It is not propounded with the slightest dogmatic animus. It is advanced solely as an illustration of what may possibly be true, as suggested by the general evidence of the phenomena of history and the facts of experience. The thoughts embodied in it are so wonderful, the method of it is so rational, the region of contemplation into which it lifts the mind is so grand, the prospects it opens are of such universal reach and import, that the study of it brings us into full sympathy with the sublime scope of the idea of immortality and of a cosmopolitan vindication of providence uncovered to every eye. It takes us out of the littleness of petty themes and selfish affairs, and makes it easier for us to believe in the vastest hopes mankind have ever known. It causes the most magnificent conceptions of human destiny to seem simply proportional to the native magnitude and beauty of the powers of the mind which can conceive such things. After traversing the grounds here set forth we feel that if the view based on them be not the truth, it must be because God has in reserve for us a sequel greater and lovelier, not meaner than our brightest dream hitherto. The worthiest theory of the fate of man which the spirit of man can construct must either be a revelatory divination of the truth, or an inadequate attempt to grasp the design of the Creator in its true glory. It is impious and absurd to hold that man can think out a scheme superior to the one God has decreed. And it seems equally unreasonable to suppose that the scheme of God for the future stages of our career is one which has no hints in our present experience. Certainly it appears more likely that the sequel will be discovered by the logical completion of the

inwrought order which has been slowly unfolding from the first. And what do history and prophecy show more plainly than the tendency to a convergence of all humanity in every man? Spreading consanguinity in descent and growth of sympathetic knowledge both point to this. Perfect this in each man, and illuminate his whole organism and its relations with adequate intelligence, and we have a true resurrection, not indeed of decayed bodies from the grave, but of historic states of consciousness from their latent embedment in the nervous system, and their undulatory record in the dynamic medium of the creation. Our senses now convert certain sets of undulations of the ethereal medium into perceptions of light, heat, sound, and so interpret their contents and extract their tidings. It is not impossible that in a coming stage of development we may obtain additional senses; our spirits may command the means of translating into correspondent states of consciousness all the other modes of vibration of the ethereal medium, and grasp the keys of unlimited knowledge decyphering every secret wherever they go. The whole universe may be a palimpsest preserving the inscriptions of all deeds, and every soul may be a reagent gifted with the power to recover and read its own.

As each generation is the inheritor of the preceding ones, all of which from the first prolong their existence into the last in unbroken continuity of historic conduct and responsibility, justice may at the ripened period be naturally summed up without any miracle. We all are projections of our ancestors. They properly in us suffer and enjoy in accordance with what has flowed from their lives.

The change in the views of Mr. Alger, as is indicated in the above quotations, shows conclusively that there is a great dignity and power back of the idea of reincarnation. Apparently this honest investigator, in spite of his Christian training, was able to reach a certain degree of insight into the real beauty and truth of the idea.

C. S.

GENIUS

A clever man once made the remark that genius is one tenth inspiration and nine tenths perspiration. If a believer in reincarnation had made that remark it would have been as wise as it is clever. In that sense it would rightly set forth that achievement or apparent endowment come only from previous effort. But, as wisdom presupposes a knowledge of the truth, these words, from the mouth of a non-believer in this theory, merely sound well, without being in the least true.

In the first place, what is genius? Whether we define it as supreme native endowment, original creative power or the intuitional and spontaneous in contradistinction to the disciplined and trained, the idea of manual labor seems unrelated, antipathetic.

In those individuals whom we have called geniuses, the rare exotic flower of genius has blossomed full-blown, without visible seed, sprout or bud. It has seemed to spring "full fledged from the brain of Jove"; it has appeared as the perfect consummate effect of an unseen cause. Talent, that younger sister of Genius, may thrive in the atmosphere of sordid toil, but Genius seems to be born with only the tips of her toes touching the earth, fully equipped at birth for life in the higher ether.

As a corroboration of this statement, we have only to examine the early lives of those individuals who, through the avenue of one of the arts or sciences, have expressed what we have named Genius. As the material gathered from these

many sources is practically exhaustless, let us confine ourselves to the study of a few individuals whose genius in the art of music is undisputed.

When Handel was seven years old, he was visiting, with his father, the chapel of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels. After the regular service had ended, the child found his way to the organ and began a performance of his own; and although he had not had the slightest training in music, he extemporized melodies, with the correct harmonies.

When Haydn was six years old, he was singing masses in a church choir, and playing both the clavier and the violin.

Before Mozart was seven, he had given public performances on the piano-forte before the Court in Vienna. Several interesting anecdotes are told of this precocious child. Among them is this: One evening a violinist friend brought to the Mozart home some trios of his own composition. A second violinist was lacking. The child Mozart, then seven years of age, begged to be allowed to try the part. He had received a present of a small fiddle but had had no instruction. His father consented to the experiment with great misgivings. The trio started and the other two found with amazement that the small boy was playing every note in perfect tune and time. At a very early age Mozart composed a concerto which was so difficult that no one could play it.

Schumann also, at the age of seven, was composing, although even the simplest rules of thoroughbass were totally unknown to him. Mendelssohn and Chopin were playing in public at nine, and could read music before they could read print.

At ten, Verdi was appointed organist in the village church at Rancole, Italy.

The choirmaster who taught the young Schubert singing, says with the utmost frankness: "Whenever I wished to teach him anything new I found that he had already mastered it; consequently I cannot be said to have given him any lessons at all. I merely amused myself and regarded him with direct astonishment."

It is a hoary saying that "Art is long, but Life is short." Knowing, as many of us do, the difficulty of acquiring a thorough musical education in even the allotted three-score years and ten, is it not demanding much of our credulity to believe that Mozart and Handel, before their seventh year, could have acquired sufficient knowledge of harmony, counterpoint and the laws of musical composition, to be able to compose a concerto?

If this knowledge was not acquired by diligent study before the age of seven, how and from where did it come?

One of two causes is usually offered as an explanation of this unusual amount of knowledge in childhood—Heredity and Environment.

Let us take the same group of composers whose early years we have already discussed, and see if heredity and environment can explain their genius.

Handel's father was a very severe old man who never allowed his son to go near a musical instrument of any kind, and who took the child out of the public school for the reason that the musical gamut was taught there in addition to the ordinary studies.

Haydn's father was a wheelwright; his mother, a cook in a small Austrian village. None of Schumann's relations, as far back as can be traced, had even a fondness for music. Verdi was the son of an inn-keeper; Chopin, the son of a French teacher. In a long list of musical composers the name of Bach is the only one that could be cited as a possible proof of the theory of heredity. Almost without exception the predecessors of musical geniuses have been without more than a trace of musical talent, and the home lives of these gifted children have nearly always been entirely uncondusive to the development of that talent.

Again, if musical genius is the result of inherited tendencies, why are the children of geniuses notoriously devoid of talent?

If the theories of heredity and environment fail to explain genius, where then lies the answer? To quote Elbert Hubbard: "Things all men can do and explain are natural; things we cannot explain are supernatural. Progress consists in taking things out of the supernatural pigeon-holes and placing them in the natural."

We call genius supernatural because no explanation of it seems forthcoming. But is not the theory of reincarnation a perfectly simple explanation, a key that will unlock the door of mystery which separates the genius from ordinary comprehension?

Common sense teaches us that there can be no effect without an antecedent cause. Therefore genius itself must be the effect of definite causes, the result of endeavor along certain lines, that turning point where impression becomes expres-

sion. And, as it is manifest that labor which has culminated in genius has not been performed in the present earth life of those we know as geniuses, is it not reasonable to admit that the work has been done in lives prior to this; that in other lives the rose has been the bud, the oak the acorn?

Beethoven, that greatest of all composers, knowing full well that his then present life would yield to him neither recognition nor happiness, expressed his firm conviction that in other, less stormy lives he would reap the fruit of his labors. When seemingly crushed by Fate, unable even to hear those glorious melodies which had found their expression through his brain, undaunted, unconquered, he wrote in a letter to Wegeler: "I will finally grasp Fate by the throat; it shall not utterly crush me. Oh, it is so glorious to live a thousand times!"

Leona Clarkson Grugan.



The answer, in part, of Glaucus, the Greek, to the pleadings of his fellow-prisoner that he become a Christian before the officer summon him to the arena:—

"In this last hour it were a craven thing and a base to yield to hasty terror what should only be the result of lengthened meditation. . . . Think we of each other with equal charity, I honoring thy sincerity, thou pitying my blindness or my obdurate courage. As has been my deeds, such will be my reward; and the Power or Powers above will not judge harshly of human error, when it is linked with honesty of purpose and truth of heart."

Last Days of Pompeii, Bk. V, Ch. I.

THE SONG OF THE CITY

The Northern Buddhist—and all Chinamen, in fact—find in the deep roar of some of the great and sacred rivers the keynote of Nature. It is a well-known fact in Physical Science as well as in Occultism that the aggregate sound of Nature, such as is heard in the roar of great rivers, and the noise produced by the waving of tops of trees in large forests, or that of a city heard at a distance, is a definite single tone of quite an appreciable pitch. Thus Professor Rice (*Chinese Music*) shows that the Chinese recognized the fact thousands of years ago by saying that “the waters of the Hoang-ho rushing by intoned the “kung,” called “the great tone” in Chinese music; and he shows this tone corresponding with the *F*, considered by modern physicists to be the actual tonic of Nature. Professor B. Silliman mentions it, too, in his *Principles of Physics*, saying that “this tone is held to be middle *F* of the piano, which may, therefore, be considered the keynote of Nature.”

Aloft, alone in my far, high room,
I hear the breathing, beating boom,
The endless Song of the City!
The Gods are at work at their mighty loom,
The Gods of Humanity's weal and doom,
Of Life and Death and Hate and Pity.
And like the roar
Of a tempest o'er
The tops of the forest crashing;
Like the surf-beat shore
Where evermore
The Ocean waves are dashing,
Now the mystic ear
Of spirit can hear
One tone supreme all dominating;
Over this busy, beehive hum,
Out of the city's sounding drum,
I feel this one, great note vibrating,
“God's in His world, and good shall come
Out of this toiling and hating.”

Chester Wood, in “*The Fra.*”

THE THINKER AND HIS VEHICLES

Plato taught: "The creation of bones and flesh was in this wise: the foundation of these is the marrow which binds together body and soul, and the marrow is made out of such of the primary triangles as are adapted by their perfection to produce all the four elements."

This sounds senseless unless one knows what the "triangles" are—the sixth of the Great Hierarchies of Spiritual Beings who guide the solar system, and that They give *mind* to humanity. Then it does not sound so like "far-rango" as our famous modern physician calls it.

I came into this life unable to talk, to see, to hear, to walk, to crawl, to think. Hearing came very quickly and then the knowledge of loving arms. Then came taste; I was taught to eat. It was weeks before I could focus my eyes on objects or detect odors. For weeks I slept a great deal; I made queer sounds; I cried.

The brain is a portion of matter. In it the mind functions, or works. What can we find out about the mind by studying the matter through which it acts? Students of the nervous system have found out many interesting things about the Thinker and his vehicle. One of the greatest is, that well-defined portions of the brain react only to particular mental excitations. When these portions of the brain are rendered physically unfit, their special mental functions cease. Man possesses one attribute that differentiates him from all other animals—that of speech. The speech center has been definitely found. Paul Broca defined the locality in 1861, and it is called after

him, Broca's convolution. This new fact was proven by injuries to that part in the human subject. Broca showed that in all cases of persons dying of paralysis of the right side due to apoplexy, and who with the onset of the paralysis lost the power of utterance, damage to that locality was demonstrable. Then two other discoveries were made—that damage to one separate brain locality causes *word* deafness and damage to another locality caused the subject to become wholly illiterate. By 1870 it was found that each of the special senses has its anatomical seat in the brain, while in a centrally placed zone are found the seats governing the voluntary movements of the muscles. The anatomical seats of the senses and also those of muscular movements are found in both hemispheres of the brain. No doubt their office is congenital. But it was soon demonstrated that the anatomical seats of the faculty of speech are found only in *one* of the two hemispheres. Thus, if the seat of articulate speech be destroyed in a person after middle life, the loss is usually incurable. He can no longer speak, though the same convolution in the other side of the head be perfect. The same is true as regards word-deafness or word-blindness from injury of their respective places, for the corresponding localities in the other hemisphere, though not hurt at all, are word-deaf and word-blind, simply because they never had anything to do with speech. It has also been proven that the gift of one hemisphere with speech was because it was the one related to the most used hand in childhood. In all right-handed persons the speech centers are in the left hemisphere, and in left-handed

persons in the right hemisphere. Two conclusions follow this knowledge—brain matter as such does not originate speech, for then both hemispheres would have their speech centers; and, again, either of the hemispheres is good for speech if something begins early enough in life to use it for that purpose. That something is the Personality, the Thinker, in the human childform, beginning his self-education in his new body. He uses one hand more than the other and one hemisphere exclusively, the other remaining thoughtless for life.

Later it was found out as a physical fact that our mental faculties are distinct from the elementary functions of sensation and motion. Our ability to know, to recognize objects or meanings, are impressed anew in each life on the brain, as speech is acquired. Injury of certain areas of brain-matter abolishes all power to recognize what the eye sees or ear hears. In the auditory area are places which, if hurt, cause the person to become *tune* deaf, while by injury in another spot *all* power to distinguish sounds is lost, the injury always taking place in the hemisphere in which is the seat of speech.

We know that these mental faculties were created after birth, so it follows that the Personality himself shaped his new body for his use, actually modifying his own brain.

There has been a time when each human physical brain on earth to-day did not exist. There will come a time when every human brain now in use will cease to work. Why? The physical structure will wear out, the internal force acting upon and through it will withdraw and the instrument decay. But while in use, every spe-

cial psychical function is subserved by its own special seat in the material brain and that function is impaired if its brain place is damaged.

It is the gray matter of the surface of the brain which is the definite seat of the conscious mind, the most interesting substance in the world, for it is the only matter that we know that is directly associated with mind. Injuries to it often cause peculiar mental disorders, including change in the moral character. This is also produced by brain poisons, opium, Indian hemp, alcohol. Thus, as one physician says: "a confirmed drunkard finally becomes more unlike his former self than an average European differs from an average Asiatic." Why? Because the instrument is injured. Another and greater reason is deterioration of the Personality himself. "None else compels." He evolves or retrogrades at will.

The human brain has not even one peculiarity not found in a baboon's brain and the scalpel can not reveal a single physical reason why baboon and man are so far apart. Man's physical body fails to explain him. He can be measured by one faculty that is his alone—speech. By his words, if we have mind enough to understand them, we know that Francis Bacon grasps the principles of all knowledge. So with lesser men—we are not dumb. There is a God within. The power of *making* words is one of the greatest possessions of man and differentiates him from the brutes. No speechless race has been found, however low we go in the scale of human intelligence.

It has been proven that sound words and sight words are registered in different parts of the used brain hemisphere. The words we speak proceed

from still another place in the brain; none of these originate words but only register them. As no one has been born with the gift of speech, it follows that it is acquired by having words registered on the brain by the personality. (We know by observation how greatly the words registered for use differ in kind and number by different persons.) Some agent enters these brain localities, and finding them at birth unfamiliar with words of any kind, proceeds by a process of teaching to impress words on the gray matter of one hemisphere for his use—*words*, not thoughts.

Think how long it took to learn to read! It took months, years of persevering effort to register words, letters, combinations of words and what each symbol stands for. There was nothing spontaneous about it. The *will* of the informing personality did it; a very impressive and encouraging fact that by a constant repetition of a given stimulus we can effect lasting change in our brain matter and acquire greater powers thereby. Children, becoming aphasic gradually learn to talk again, educating the centers in the other hemisphere; but this is impossible in the adult, as the brain matter at some time ceases to be plastic enough.

Someone has said that the brain of man and the mind of man do not correspond. Man's brain is physically much like that of a chimpanzee, but his mind is akin to God. It has invented, created. It has changed the whole earth in its aspect. It has evolved language to express thought. The Thinker uses his brain as a vehicle and it works in response to his personal intent. Dr. Thomson

has likened the brain to the receptive wax leaves of the phonograph.

Helen Keller is a most remarkable example of a strong personality overcoming a faulty habitation. She is there in her disabled dwelling, a great mind able to overcome deafness and blindness from babyhood and to write "Words are the mind's wings." This she did through the second sense, developed in the Second Root Race, that of touch. How that Thinker has *worked* to make the tactile area in the brain do what it has done! We conclude from the study of Helen Keller and others who have surmounted great disabilities that we can develop our brains if we have strong enough wills. Great aptitudes mean work; if not in this life, then in previous ones. We make ourselves. If we do not like the result so far, we can do the work over again, and better, in future lives. If we want greater or new brain capacity, we can get it by working for it; but the process of education must be carried out by just one teacher, ourselves. Is it not plain that these educated areas in the cortex of the brain vary greatly in different people, showing the different inherent capacities in the informing personalities? Here we justly find the wise man, the ignorant man, the artist, the musician, the scientist. We are not all born with equally good brains because we have not all earned equally good brains, nor do we all bring equally good mental capacities with us when we enter new bodies. A great personality can make a great brain; but no brain, however good, ever made a great personality. Dr. Thomson says: "No human being ever brought with him a single one of these wondrous places

in his brain, nor ever inherited them. No question about physical life equals this question for surpassing significance. Not being native, that is, congenital, it follows that these seats of mental faculty must be artificially acquired."

If only one hemisphere is used for thoughts, of what use is the other one? Of very great use as far as motion and feeling are concerned. If it were not in its place, paralysis and loss of sensation would follow on its opposite side in the body. Is it not reasonable to believe that a Thinker consisting of Will, Wisdom and Activity, or Atma, Budhhi, Manas, or the will, the spiritual essence and the mind possesses and makes the brain human and in each life fashions it into an instrument for his use? Plato's Triangle informs the four elements and they are his dwelling till death.

This Thinker is free. He works or not as he pleases, as his will directs. The will is the apex of the triangle, and rightly so, for spirituality and mind are as nothing without the governing power in our lives. It is because of will that on man alone rests the weight of personal responsibility. No mere animal is responsible. That is man's prerogative and man's responsibility.

This wonderful will alters the brain so that in time the brain thinks along certain lines and in certain ways. It is good that this is so, for left to itself, the brain responds to any outside excitation poured upon it. The will says what thoughts shall and shall not stay in the brain. Our force and usefulness depend upon this alone. It means self-restraint, it means *re-creating* one's self—evolution.

As we grow older, the Will says to Time: "The physical body decays, but leave the brain intact to the last. It is mine." The stronger the will, the longer the brain will do good work unless some physical happening interferes. If it is the will to acquire knowledge, or wealth, or china, or to do good deeds, it keeps the interest alive and the brain remains active.

What does this powerful Thinker do to increase the longevity of his dwelling? He gives it blessed sleep and goes away, coming back to drive it again after its night's rest. When the body does not get that rest, it does not last long. The conscious personality "puts out the light to keep the candle from being burned up too fast." When it is used up, the Thinker says "good-bye" and leaves it.

We never see this Thinker. But we know he is there. When he leaves the body in sleep, he often acquires knowledge which he brings back with him. Many people have proven this. The time comes when he leaves the body and never comes back to it. Is he extinct? No! Some time he will return to this old world and inform a new body, make a new personality and do his lessons and yet again and again, till school days are over and life and death no longer need exist for him.

Alice L. Strong.

HEAVEN

In the editorial section of the *New York American* of Sunday, November 10, appeared a full-page editorial under the caption "What Kind of a Heaven Do You Want?" The article is too long to print in full, but the abstracts quoted below clearly convey the writer's thought:

If anything is certain, it is that you, or whatever may be left of you after death, will spend all eternity somewhere, in one manner or another.

You may lie in the ground until the Angel summons you to your punishment or reward.

You may fly off to Heaven through infinite space as soon as those around you whisper, "He's dead." Whatever happens when you stop breathing, the remains of you will go on forever.

Intelligence and faith both tell us that there must be another life; that existence, like time, once started, can never end. A majority of human beings believe, in a rather indefinite way, in a Heaven where the good live forever, rewarded during endless billions of years, not for doing anything in particular here, but for omitting to do certain things that Divine wisdom forbids.

We all have vaguely in mind the abode of eternal happiness as faith and revelation see it. That Heaven is strange to our way of living, with curious beasts near the great throne, and the four and twenty elders, sitting on the best seats, rising all together, to cast their twenty-four crowns on the ground before the throne in their profound admiration. . . .

You read of this Heaven and are perhaps disturbed, feeling that you could not be at home there for billions of years, always watching, with nothing to do on your own account.

You feel that it would all be enjoyable, but, realizing that nothing could ever go wrong and that you could not be of any possible use there, except as one among millions, playing your harp, you might say, without lack of respect for anybody, "I am going to get tired of this before it

is all over," and the hard part is that it never would be over. You would live within sight of those four and twenty elders and the beasts "full of eyes before and behind" through all Eternity, forever and forever. You couldn't even go crazy. And this makes it worth while to discuss, earnestly and respectfully, the kind of Heaven that modern men would select.

There is comfort for us all in Saint John's gospel.

In Chapter XIV, "Christ comforteth his disciples" with the hope of Heaven. We quote the comforting lines:

"Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

There is consolation. Heaven has different aspects. In it there are many mansions. . . The many mansions may be located in the depth of some vast nebula, or entirely outside of our little corner, which is called the Milky Way.

What is the one thing that all Americans would ask for in their Heaven? Is it not a chance to work, struggle and improve? Would you not, after a billion years of "bliss" without effort, beg permission to go back to earth and be the man with the hoe, and plant corn and raise a family, and plan to leave your boy better off than you began?

Rely upon it, there is hope and an explanation in those words: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you."

In those mansions are endless movement and change. They are as great as the universe, which is endless space in endless time. The speed of light goes seven times around the earth in one second, and light could travel a million years without reaching the farthest great suns, the outlying mansions, of infinite activity, struggle and change, in which man, gradually developing, will find plenty of opportunity for all his efforts. . . .

Possibly when this earth comes to an end, it must end, as all created things do, we, its inhabitants, shall all move on together to the next "mansion," one of the many in which we shall forever live and improve.

What is your idea of Heaven? Could anything in it take the place of work?

I feel quite certain that the writer of this editorial does not believe in reincarnation, for he nowhere in the article gives the least intimation of it. That apparent fact makes the editorial of more than passing interest to reincarnationists, because it clearly shows that when a man really begins to think seriously about his future life, he can not help arriving at a point where the belief in reincarnation will help solve his problems.

What is the one thing that all big men would ask for in their heaven? Is it not a chance to work, struggle, improve? Would they not wish to return to earth to till the soil, build bridges, railroads, factories, etc.? Of course they would; and this thought is not a vague wish for something, but is the subconscious awakening of the souls of men held down by ages of superstitious belief, and only in our semi-enlightened times beginning to break through the prohibitive trend of thought fastened upon mankind by the teachings of the church.

Of course man wants to come back to an earth heaven, because he is beginning to realize, subconsciously, that he must, and that there is no greater joy than performing some useful work on earth. Gradually the awakening will come until he will realize in his full consciousness that so long as this earth is in the favorable environment for human habitation, his soul will continue to manifest on earth in bodily form and do its share of the world's work.

When the time for the earth's disintegration approaches, another planet will be ready for human habitation and man's soul will move on

to that, and so time without end; and all this with the possibility, nevertheless, that his soul may not even be required to remain within the confines of our solar system, for its extreme tenuousness, material structure though it is, would present no obstacle to its transmigration to a planet in another star system. We have, of course, no means of knowing positively that such transmigration takes place, but the possibility of it is not deniable. What we do know, however, and can positively maintain, is the fact that—We, or whatever may be left of us after death, will spend all eternity somewhere, in one manner or another—and, as we are of the stuff that human beings are made of, it is safe to accept that nature will make use of us for that purpose, housing our souls in new bodies, for in that form only can we be of use for service and evolution.

William W. Weitling.



OUR LEGION WORK

With the return of peace-conditions it is to be hoped that members of *The Legion* will take up the work of the body with renewed energy. The opportunities are abundant for each one of us. Let us seize them! It is not our purpose to build up a great centralized power; it is our aspiration to act as a co-ordinating force in the furtherance of all plans, everywhere in the world, directed to the dissemination of the knowledge about the great Law. The permanence and development of consciousness-units and the conditions of spiritual evolution are what we wish to aid the world in thinking about.

So consider what can be done. Devise plans and write us to see if we cannot help you.

FIELD NOTES

A league of nations to originate and maintain international co-operation instead of antagonism among the nations is certainly favored by all the idealists of the world. Let us help to get the league into existence; later on details can be smoothed out.

Write a letter to your heads of government favoring the league. In America letters should be sent to both representatives and senators.

Mr. G. Williams, of Durban, has resigned as the Representative of the *Legion* in South Africa. The *Legion* wishes to thank Mr. Williams for his difficult pioneer work and trusts that the South African members and friends will continue their efforts for the work.

A Group of earnest workers has been organised in Columbus, Ohio, making the second in that state.

Securing some new subscribers for this magazine is helpful work, as is also placing subscriptions in libraries.